

NEWS RELEASE

Idaho Department of Water Resources



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Small Idaho School District Cuts Ribbon on Biomass Heating System

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After months of planning, the Council School District welcomed its new biomass heating system during a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 30. It is the same type of system now being considered by the Kellogg School District.

Council's new system, fueled by wood chips, will heat the school district's campus buildings, including the elementary and senior high schools. The system replaces an old diesel-fueled boiler that became unreliable and very expensive to operate.

Through the Idaho Energy Division's Rebuild Idaho Program, Siemens Building Technologies of Boise conducted an audit of the buildings that showed the biomass heating system could save the Council District \$1 million in energy costs the first 15 years.

Siemens predicts the Kellogg District will save \$3.3 million in energy costs over the length of a 20-year bond that is being proposed to pay for the system.

Wood chips from thinning projects in the forests surrounding the Silver Valley would fuel the Kellogg system if voters approve it.

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Council Ribbon Cutting Video and Sound Bites:

Murry Dalglish, superintendent, Council School District

00:21 “What this means for Council is that this district will be saving literally millions of dollars over the life of the system. And with the rise of energy prices, and the cost for utilities for schools, this is a tremendous advantage that we have that we can put that money into education rather than into utilities.” **00:41**

Ed Warren, Siemens Project Manager

1:00 “This is our biomass boiler. This is the thing we are so excited about. On top here, this big blue monster is the boiler. They aren’t very glamorous, it is a heat exchanger. With water in it, we are going to make water hot. This is going to burn so clean, it is my understanding that the unit in Garvey, Montana, which burns twice as much wood as we anticipate, carries their’s out in a 5 gallon bucket, once a week, the ashes. This motor is attached to the auger that goes through this wall into our chip storage bin. That auger pulls chips out onto this conveyor belt. This conveyor belt runs the entire length of the building, as does the auger. When the chips are gone here, the auger moves. So the chips get fed up into a metering bin, you can look down there, the yellow wire with the big blue box, that’s the metering bin. And that’s where the chips go from the belt. From there they are fed into the boiler as the boiler demand asks for it.” **2:09**

Mary Farnsworth, district ranger, Payette National Forest

2:31 “This is just chip. There’s some needles, and some bark and the whole deal and it will go to good use. The *“fuels for schools program”* is a great program. The Forest Service, in partnering with the school district, is able to remove some chips out of the woods and dispose of it in a more effective manner. To give you an example, we have a lot of thinning projects where we’re thinning the forests for fire prevention reasons as well as forest health. That debris historically has just been piled up and burned on site. And this is a way, we can chip it, pull it out of the woods, removing the fuels from the woods making them more fire resistant, and then put the chip to good use.” **3:18**

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